

U.S. Serial No.: 10/601,611
Filed: June 23, 2003
Group Art Unit: 3763
Examiner: Mendez, Manuel A
Atty. Docket No: 22719-42

REMARKS

The pending Office Action addresses claims 1-11, of which claims 1, 2, and 7-10 stand rejected. The Examiner appears to have overlooked claims 3-6 and 11. Applicant therefore assumes that claims 3-6 and 11 are allowable.

Amendments to the Claims

Independent claim 1 is amended to recite that the barrier is coupled to the sidewall. Independent claim 11 is amended to remove the features of the catheter. Applicants also add new claims 12-15. No new matter is added.

Rejections Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §112

Claim 8 is rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting essential elements. In particular, the Examiner submits that the claims lacks structural elements to enable the removal of a barrier by the microprocessor. Claim 8 is amended to clarify how the microprocessor can remove a barrier, thereby obviating the basis for this rejection.

Rejections Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1 and 2 are rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,841,308 of Tate. The Examiner argues that Tate discloses a catheter assembly substantially as claimed. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Independent claim 1 is directed to an implantable fluid management device that includes a catheter having a proximal end, a distal end, and an inner lumen extending therethrough. A plurality of fluid entry ports are formed in a sidewall of the catheter and are in fluid communication with the inner lumen of the catheter. A fluid-impermeable barrier is coupled to the sidewall and occludes selected fluid entry ports. The barrier is selectively removable with respect to each of the selected fluid entry ports.

Tate teaches a catheter with coils that are normally separated to allow for fluid flow (as shown in FIG. 1). The fluid flow can be cut off by applying tension to a wire stylet (element 9 of FIG. 1 and 2) to compact the coils (as shown in FIG. 2). The coils are thus slidably disposed in the catheter and are not coupled to the sidewall of the catheter, as required by independent claim

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1 of the present application. Further, Tate does not teach that the barrier is selectively removable with respect to each of the selected fluid entry ports. The coils used in Tate block all of the ports when the coils are compacted and individual ports cannot be selected to have their barrier removed. Rather, when the tension is removed from the stylet, the ports all open in the order that they are located on the catheter.

Accordingly, claim 1, as well as claim 2 which depends therefrom, distinguish over Tate.

Rejections Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103

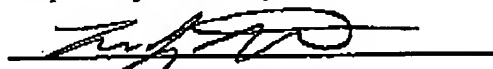
Claims 7-10 are rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being anticipated by Tate in view of Huss, Buyers, Hooven, and Yarger. The Examiner relies on Huss to teach a catheter with filters along its longitudinal axis, Buyers to teach a catheter with a filter at its proximal end, and Hooven and Yarger to teach catheters with rows of ports in the distal end. Claims 7-10 depend from claim 1, and therefore distinguish over Tate for the reasons previously discussed. Huss, Buyers, Hooven, and Yarger do not remedy the deficiencies of Tate, as none of these references teaches or even suggests a barrier coupled to a sidewall and occluding selected fluid entry ports which is selectively removable with respect to each of the selected fluid entry ports. Accordingly, claims 7-10 represent allowable subject matter.

Conclusion

Applicants submit that claims 1-11, as well as now claims 12-15, are now in condition for allowance, and allowance thereof is respectfully requested. The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned attorney for Applicants if such communication is deemed to expedite prosecution of this application.

Date: September 30, 2005

Respectfully submitted,



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